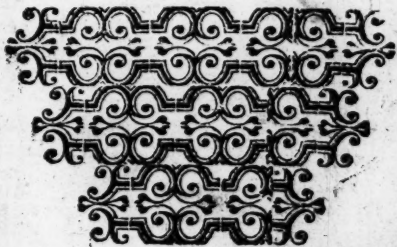




*Saint Augustinos Ladder  
to Pardilo.*

**Imprinted at London at  
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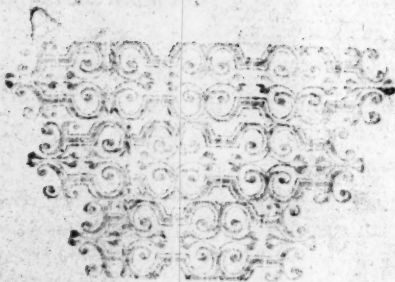
✓ *Amos V. 2 P. 1121.*



~~W. p. 1121 1161.~~



Printed at London at  
the Office of the  
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House of Commons



To the right worshipfull La-  
dye, the L. fane true felicitie  
with the increace of God his moſte  
excellent bleſſings.



**I**t is not rare but  
vſuall, to ſee gifts bro-  
ught vnto a ritch mā  
and many preſents, ge-  
uē to him that lacketh  
not, verifying that in things earthly,  
vvhich properly is ſpoke of the minde.  
To him that hath it ſhall be giuē & he  
ſhall haue abundāce, euen ſo the abun-  
dance of Gods good gifts, the humble-  
nes of minde, the loue of vertue, and  
zeale of ſeruing God, vvhich I haue  
hard and ſeene in your Ladyſhip hath  
long ſince geuen me great deſire by  
vvrtyng ſomvvhāt to ad ſome good  
thing vnto the heap of thoſe good ver-  
tues. But finding in my ſelfe nothing,  
vvhervvith to anſwere my deſire, as  
being voide of learning or vviſdome  
vworthy

## dedicatory.

worthy to be heard: I became cleere-  
ly resolved to folowve my purpose no  
further, and to end vwith prayer un-  
to God, that he vwould blesse his gifts  
in you to the encrease of an hundreth  
folde: yet spending some time as my lei-  
sure did serue me in turning the leues  
of that auncient father AVGVSTIN,  
I found this litle Pamphlet, an apt  
peece (as me thought) for that purpose,  
and a Ieuell worthy to be vborne,  
not about the neck: but about the hart  
of the greatest Lord or Lady in this  
vworld, namely a ppaier of stayres or a  
ladder of pure golde, so artificially  
vvrought, that vvho so listeth to god  
there on: shall be sure to come safely vp  
into the presence chamber of Gods e-  
uer lasting glory, and in so small rounge  
this Iuell is cōtrined, that it may vvell  
be placed in the least of all the christi-  
an harts, yea and the lesse the hart is:  
the more aptly it may be hidden therein,  
vvhich



## The Epistle

which also for the antiquitie is, a  
boue eleuen hundreth yeere olde, and  
for excelencie the litle woorke dooth  
so praise it self that a far better pen the  
myne adding somewhat to the praise  
theroff should rather blemish then beu-  
tifie it by saying much lesse, or much  
worse then the same dooth say for it  
selfe, hauing therfore (as I haue said)  
nothing in me to further the loue of  
vertue and zeale of christianitie which  
God hath geuen you, I haue thus ob-  
tained this olde father saint AVGVS-  
TINE to doo it for me, vvhom if it  
shall please your ladyship to hear vwith  
good affectiō attētiuely: the paine shall  
sure be much les the the profit, and you  
shall not fail to reap great fruit vwith  
small trauaile, yea the labour shall soōe  
be gone and the profit long remaine.  
Now vwhat so euer therfore in this  
litle treatis is spoken: I humbly beseech  
your ladyship allway to remember. It

is

## dedicatory.

Cap. 1.

is not I: but the ancient and excellent father Saint AVGVSTINE that speaketh. It is he that saith, reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation are the steps of that ladder that leadeth to heauen. It is he that expounding the woords of Christe saith, seeke by reading: and ye shall finde by meditation,

Cap. 2.

knock by praying: and it shall be opened vnto you by contemplation. It is he that saith, reading dooth as it were

Ibidem.

apply substāciall meat vnto the mouth, meditatio dooth chooue it & break it, praiser obtaineth the sweetnes of it: contemplation is the sweetnes it self.

Cap. 11.

It is Saī AVGVSTINE that saith, reading vwith out meditation is saples, & meditation vwith out reading is erroneus. And lest some fond body should imagi, that this reding vwhich hee so oft speaketh of, should be the reading of any other thing but of Scripture only, and that vwith these woords

Cap. 1.

## The Epistle.

words: reading (saith he) is a looking upon the scripture with a diligent entention of the minde, and in the tenth chapter, he saith these foure **Cap. 10.** steps are so linked together, that they which goe before without them which follow: can profit little or nothing. & they which follow without them that goe before: doo profit elsdōe or neuer. To conclude, the whole somme & effect therof: is nothing els but that the reading of Scripture, the meditation upō the Scripture, prayer to obtain the vnderstanding of Scripture, and contemplatiō in the sweetnes of Gods promises cōtained in the Scripture is the onely gate of Heauen, and the way to attain eternal life. For the cōfirmatiō wherof: it were no hard matter for a man of mean knowledge to cōpile a huge volume, and to bring many hundred places out of the auncient fathers. VVherin they  
plainly

## dedicatory.

plainly and directly confirm the same, that by these steps onely, & none other way: a man must goe to heauen. But moſte of all it ought to mooue vs that God him ſelf by his owne word hath ratified this to be the only way to Heauen, and that for all men, without any exception. For who can haue greater priuiledge then a King? or greater occaſion to ſurceaſſe from the continuall exerciſe of this reading, meditation, prayer and cōtemplation?

Deut. 17.

Deut. 18, 19.

And is it not expreſly ſet down by Gods cōmaūdemēt, that a King ought to haue the book of Gods lawes by hī, and ought to read therein all the dayes of his life? who ſhould ſooner be exempt frō this diligent exerciſe of Scripture then a Souldier or Captain, and that durīg the vvarres? But dooth not God him ſelf ſpeak vnto the noble Conqueror & captā, Iosua in the firſt ētre of his vwarres, and ſtraightly charge him?

Jos. 1. ver. 8

## dedicatory.

him saying? Let not the book of this Ios. 1.  
ver. 8.  
 laue departe out of thy mouth, but  
 occupy thy minde therin day & night.  
 Where mark these precise tearmes,  
 Book, mouth, minde, day, night. For  
 who seeth not that vpon euery of these  
 words much might be said if breuitie  
 would suffer it? When or at what  
 time should any intermission from the  
 exercise of Scripture be graunted to  
 any man, if it be couenient for a noble  
 man trauieling by the way in his iour-  
 ney to read the Scriptures? And did Mat. 8.  
ver. 30.  
 not the noble Lord Tresurer of the  
 great Queene Candace trauieling by  
 the way, sit in his Chariot reading of  
 Esayas the Prophet? & was not the  
 end thereof saluation of his soule?. Is  
 it not also writtē by Saint Luke for Mat. 19.  
ver. 11.  
 an euerlasting commendation vnto  
 those that were the noblest of birth  
 among them of Thessalonica, because  
 (when Paule had preached) they ser-  
 ued

B.

## The Epistle

ched the Scriptures, and that dayly to see whether it were so or not? And by that meanes they were brought vnto the faith of Christe. Yea and not noble men only, but Ladies also by nāe are apointed of God to tread these steps, and they shall neuer come to heauen other wise then by reading the scriptures, by meditation of the scriptures, by praier to vnderstand them, & contemplation in the sweetnes of them. And therefore Saint Iohn writeth one of his epistles vnto a Lady, that Ladies also hauing the vvoord of God so especially dyrected vnto them, might endeuour theselues with the greter diligence to read it and certely knowv themselves not to be excluded fro the exercise therof.

2. Iam. 1.  
vss. 1.

Pro. 10.

The vvisdome of GOD in the last chapter of the Prouerbs, discribing and as it were painting out the properties, not of a mean vvoma: but of a noble

# dedicatory.

ble mans vvife and a vertuous Lady,  
among other excellent qualities that  
such a vvomā ought to haue. He saith.  
She opēeth her mouth vvith vvifdōe,  
and in her tung is the lauve of grace.  
But lest I should passe the competent  
bōnds of an Epistle: I vvil breefly note  
the Book, the Chapter and the Verse  
of diuers other places, vvhere God him  
self by his holy vvord plainly teacheth  
that all men, yea, men, vvomen and  
children, ought to be diligently exer-  
cised in the vvord of God, as the onely  
vvay to eternall life and the Ladder  
of Heauen.

Deut..6. ver. 6. 7. Deut. 8. ver. 3.  
Deut. 11. ver. 18, 19, 20. Deut. 31, ver.  
11, 12. Iosū. 8 ver. 35. 1. Reg. 22. ver. 5.  
2. Reg. 23. ver. 2. 2. Esa. 8. ver. 3. 18. ibi.  
9. ver. 2. 3. Psa. 1. ver. 3. Psa. 19. ver. 7.  
Psa. 36. ver 31. 32. Psa. 119. Pro. 1. ver  
1. 2. 3. 4. Pro. 2. ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9.  
Pro. 4. ver. 20, 21. 22. Pro. 6.  
B. ij. ver.

## The Epistle.

ver. 23. ibi. 7. ver. 1. 2. 3. ibi. 8. ver. 9.  
 ibi. 28. ver. 9. Esay. 8. ver. 19. 20. E-  
 say. 29. ver. 19. Esa. 34. ver. 16. Esay.  
 48. ver. 16. Esa. 59. ver. 21. Eccle.  
 24. all. Eccle. 39. ver. 1. Mat. 4.  
 Mar. 12. ver. 24. Lu. 16. ver. 29. Iho.  
 3. ver. 39. 47. Iho. 8. ver. 43. Iho. 15.  
 ver. 3. 7. Act. 11. ver. 1. 14. Act. 13. ve.  
 26. 46. Act. 26. ver. 2. 3. Rom. 10.  
 ver. 8. 17. Rom. 15. ver. 4. 1. Cor.  
 10. ver. 11. 2. Cor. 1. ver. 13. Ephe.  
 3. ver. 1. Thesa. 4. ver. 18.  
 Phil. 2. ver. 16. Collo. 3. ver.  
 16. 2. Timothe. 3. ver. 15. 16.  
 Ia. 1. ver. 18. 20. 1. Pet. 1.  
 ver. 23. 1. Pet. 2. ver. 8. 2. Pet.  
 ver. 19. 1. Ioh. 2. ver. 12. 13.  
 14. Iude. ver. 17. Apoc. 1. ver. 3.

The very nãe of Gods vwoord ought  
 to strike into our harts, great reuerẽse  
 vovvãd it, great desire to haue it,  
 great haste to hear it, great loue to re-  
 ad it & like sare to keep it. If a King on



## dedicatory.

*a Queen should vwrite vnto vs, lord  
how vould vve shore vp our ea-  
res? vwhat haste should vve make to  
hear the contents? Beholde God him  
self hath directed his letters to euery  
one of vs, his owne spirite is his Se-  
cretary, his Prophets and Apostles are  
Purciuants & messengers that bring  
them vnto vs. Intollerable is the con-  
tempt of God that sendeth the, if vve  
doo not humbly read them, hear them  
and diligent.y mark and obserue the  
speciall points, and contents of them.  
The dredful vwoords of God doo fo-  
loue such contempt, as it is vrittē.*

*O turn you vnto my correction, lo  
I vvil expresse my minde vnto you,  
and make you vnderstād my vwoords.  
Seeing then that I haue called & you  
refused it, I haue stretched out my hād  
and no man regarded it, but all my  
counsel yee haue despised, and set my cor-  
rections at nought: therfore shall I  
also*

## The Epistle.

also laugh in your destruction &c.  
What promise can be sweeter, then  
to haue God expresse his minde vnto  
vs, and make vs vnderstand his  
vvoord? What terror can be greater  
then to haue God laugh and reioice in  
our destruction. From vvhich dreadful  
destruction: I beseech almighty God de  
liuer vs, and stay vs vppon the steps of  
his holy vword, til vve come into his  
happy kingdome.

Your La. euer to commaund,  
T. VV.

Suorum quisque Vulnerum remediū  
ex diuinis Scripturis eligat. Chri-  
stost.in act. Cap 13. Ho. 29.

¶ Let euery man chuse out of the  
diuine Scriptures, the remedy of his  
ouvn vvouñdes. These are the vvords  
of S. Iohn Chrysostom, vvriting vpon  
the 13. Chapter of the acts the 29. Ho-  
mely.

FINIS.

## To the Reader.

**I** Am not ignorāt that  
as well this, as many  
other books which are  
numbered, reputed and printed  
among the workes of Augu-  
stine Bishop of Hippo are th-  
ought of māy not to be his, wher  
in as I mean not to contend, but  
regarding more the matter thē  
the man, and also finding the  
same a mōg the rest of his works  
not only in the later editions  
but in the prints of such olde tīe  
as hardly cā be red but of those  
which are vsed to read antiqui-  
ties, wherof I my selfe haue one  
to shew. I thought it good ther-  
fore (leauing the censure to such  
as

To the Reader.

as are learned) to make no que  
stiōtherof, specially seeing this  
Ladder of Paradise long be  
fore the time of Augustine  
was set vp by Christe Iesus for  
his chosen and elected children  
to ascend into those mantions  
which he hath prepared  
for them, not only in  
the kingdōe, but also  
in the house of  
God his  
father.



# to Paradisc.

## Cap. I.



Then vpon a certain day  
being occupied with  
the bodily labour of my  
hands : I had begun to  
think vpon the exercise  
of that spirituall man,  
four spirituall steps suddenly offered the  
self vnto my minde , as I thought there-  
on,namely reading,meditation, pray-  
er and cōtemplation. This is the Ladder  
of those that be religious,by which  
they are lifted vp frō the earth in to He-  
uen. This ladder is parted in to seue  
steps, notwithstanding it is of vnmesu-  
rable and incredible greatnes,whose lo-  
wer part resting vpon the earth,the vpper  
end percereth the clouds and sercheth  
out the secrets of Heauen.

These degrees as they are in names  
and number diuers: so are they distinct  
in order and worthines,if any man do  
diligently beholde their properties, and  
their severall offices , what they work  
concerning vs,how they differ and haue  
the prebeminence one of a nother,what  
soeuer labour or study bee shall spend  
therin, they shall repute the same but

## The Ladder

Reading  
not of fa-  
bles but of  
Scripture.

Prayer is  
not to fa-  
ints but  
to God.

Short, and easy in comparisn of the great  
profit and sweetnes therof.

Reading is a looking vpon the Scrip-  
ture with a diligent intention of the  
minde. Meditation is a studious action  
of the minde, searching out by dylyt of  
proper reason, the knowledge of hidden  
trueth. Prayer is a deuout bending of  
the hart vnto God, for the putting a-  
way those things that are euil, and ob-  
tayning those things that are good. Con-  
templation is a certain lifting vp of the  
minde depending vpon God, tasting  
the Joyes of euerlasting sweetnes.

The discription of the offices of  
the foure degrees or steps,

Cap. 2.



The discription of the foure de-  
grees, then being set forth,  
Where relecth y<sup>e</sup> we beholde  
their offices. Reading seketh,  
Meditatio findeth, Prayer re-

Christes  
wordes ex-  
pounded by  
S. August-  
tin.  
Mach. 7.  
ber .7. 8.

questeth, Contemplation taketh the taste,  
wherof the Lord him self saith: seek and  
ye shall finde, knock and it shalbe ope-  
ned vnto you. Seek by reading and  
you shall finde by meditation.

Knock

## to Paradise.

Knock by praying. and it shall be opened vnto you by contemplation. Reading doth as it were apply substantiall meat vnto the mouth, Mediation doth chew it and break it, Prayer obtayneth the sweetnes of it. Contemplation is the sweetnes it self which delighteth and refresheth. Reading is in the skin, Mediation is the fat, Prayer is the motion of the desire, Contemplation is the pleasure of the sweetnes obtained, whiche thing that yet it may more manifestly appere among many: I wil set down one exāple. In reading I heard, Blessed are the pure in hert for they shall see God. Beholde here a short word but sweet and manifold in sence, and giueth vnto the feeding of the soule as it were of a Grape, which after the soule hath diligently betwed, it sayeth within it self: I wil return vnto my hart, and I wil proue if perhaps I can vnderstand and finde out this puritie.

This thing no doubt is precious, and worthy to be desired, whose possessors are called blessed, vnto which the sight of God, which is eternall life is promised, which is so greatly comended with  
so

## The Ladder

to many testimonies of þe holy scripture.

The hart then desirous to haue this thing yet moze fully to be vnfolded; be-  
ginneþ to chaunge & to bzeak this grape,  
and putteth it into the presse whiēst it  
sturreth by reason to searce whether it  
be so, and how this pzeious puritie so  
worthy to be desired, may be attayned.

The office of meditation.

Cap. 3.

**T**hen diligent meditation draw-  
ing neer, she tarieth not without,  
she hath nothing to doe in the out-  
side of the letter, she setteth fast her foot,  
she perceith the inward partes, she ses-  
keth out euery cozner attentiuely, she  
considereth that he said not, blessed are  
the cleane in body: but þe pure in minde,  
because it suffiseth not to haue innocent  
hands frō euil acts, except we be also pu-  
rified in minde from wicked thoughts,  
which thing is confirmed by the autho-  
ritie of the Prophet, saying. VWho  
shall goe vp into the hill of the Lord:  
who shall rest in his holy place? hee  
that is innocent of his hands and of a  
cleane hart. And doth againe consider  
how



to Paradise.

how greatly the same Prophet doth  
with so; this cleneth of hart. prailig thus.  
Create O Lord a new hart within me.  
And agai. If I haue beheld iniquitie in  
my hart, the Lord wil not hear me.

And thik how carful blessed Iob was in  
this watch, who said. I haue made a  
couenāt with mine eyes, that I would  
not once think vpon a Virgin. Be-  
holde how this holy man restrayned  
him self, which closed vp his eyes lest  
he should beholde vanitie, lest perhap  
he should rathly beholde that which he  
might after against his wil desire.

After meditation hath handled suche  
things touching the puritie of the hart:  
then she beginneth to muse vpon the re-  
ward, how glorio<sup>s</sup> & delectable a thing

it is to see the desired face of the Lord, The face of  
Christe can  
not be hid  
as wbe his  
mother  
sought him  
nor his bo-  
dy vppon  
earth with  
out the glo-  
ry therof.  
that excellēt face, in fauour far passing  
the chilozen of men, not now abiect and  
vile, not hauing now the countenance  
in which his mother clothed him, but  
hauing on the long garment of immor-  
talitie, crowned with the diadem with  
which his Father crowned him in the  
day of his resurrection, and glory in the  
day which the Lord hath made. Medi-  
tation

## *The Ladder*


station thinketh, how in that sight there shall be the fulnes wherof the Prophet speaketh. VVe shalbe satisfied when thy glory shal appeer. Dost thou not see what abundance of licour hath flowed out of a litle Grape? how great a fire is grown out of this one spark? how far this litle lamp (Blessed are the pure in hart for they shall see God) is stretched out in this meditation. But how far think you might the same be extended, if some man should come in place which had good experience of such matters? for I perceiue that a very deep wel it is, but I being unskilful in these matters, haue scarcely found the bucket to drawe out very few things. The soule being enflamed with these burning torches, and mortified with these desires, the alabaster of the sweet ointment being broken: it beginneth sweetly to savour, not as by taste: but as it were by smelling at the nose. Herof the Soule doth gather, how sweet a thing it were to taste the frute of this meditation. the meditation wherof shee findeth to be so pleasant. But what shall the soule doe? she burneth with desire to obtain, yet she findeth

## to Paradise

findeth not with her self how it may be  
bad, & the more she seercheth: the more  
she thirsteth, and while she applyeth  
meditation therunto: she doth but en-  
crease the pain, because the soule seeth  
not the sweetnes which meditation doth  
not give her, but sheweth her to be in  
puritie of the hart, for it lyeth not in  
him that readeth or meditateth to feele  
this sweetnes: except it be given him  
from aboue, for to read and to meditate  
is a thing common bothe to good and e-  
uill men, for the very philosophers of the  
heathen did finde out by dyt of reaso,  
wherin the effect of the true good thing  
did consist. But because when they  
knew God: they did not glorify him as  
G O D, but presuming of their owne  
strength said, our owne lung will we  
magnify, our own lips be of our selues,  
they were not worthy to feele y<sup>e</sup> things  
they could se, but waxed full of vanities  
in their imaginations, & their wisdome  
was consumed. For that wisdome, hu-  
main study of learning (but not the spi-  
rite of wisdome) had given them, which  
spirite onely giveth true wisdome, I  
mean the sweet knowledge, whiche  
when

## The Ladder

When it is in any man as an inestimable swētnes, it doth comfort & refresh him. And of this wisdome it is said.

V Visdome shall not enter in to a forward soule. This cometh of God onely, even like as the Lord hath graunted the office of baptising vnto many, but the power and authoritie in baptisme, of remitting sinnes, he hath reserved vnto him self alone. Whereupon Iohn in steed of naming Christe, by that propriety, as by way of distinguishment, pointing to him  saith This is hee which baptiseth in the holy Ghoste And so of him we may say, this is hee that giueth the true taste of wisdome, that maketh the pleasant sauored science of the soule, for speech is giuen to many, but wisdome vnto fewe, which y<sup>e</sup> Lord denideth vnto whom he wil, and after what sorte it pleaseth him.

No man  
can remit  
sin, God  
hath refer-  
red it to h  
self alone.

### The office of prayer.

#### Cap. 4.



Now y<sup>e</sup> soule seeing y<sup>e</sup> she can not by her self attain the desired swētnes of knowledge and experience & the more shee

## to Paradiſe.

ſhe approcheth vnto highnes of hart, ſo  
much the more God is liſted aboue her  
reach, ſhe humbleth her ſelf and flyeth  
vnto prayer, ſaying. O Lord thou whi-  
ch maiſt not be ſeē but of cleane harts.  
I haue ſought by reading, I haue ſear-  
ched by meditating, how the true puri-  
tie of hart might be obtained, y by the  
means therof I might in part knowe  
thee. I ſought thy countenance (O Lord)  
euen thy face did I ſeek. I haue long me-  
ditated in my hart, and in my medita-  
tion, the fire and longing to knowe thee,  
is more and more kindled, whyleſt thou  
Lord doſt break vnto me the bread of  
holy Scripture, & in breaking of bread:  
thou art the ſoner known, & the more  
I knowe thee: y more I deſire to knowe  
thee, not now in the bark of the letter:  
but in the ſailing of experience. Nei-  
ther do I aſk this (O Lord) for my merites:  
but for thy mercies ſake. For I confeſſe  
that I am an vntwozthy & ſinfull ſoule,  
not withſtanding the whelpes doo eat y  
crimes that fall from the table of their  
Lords. Giue me (O Lord) y earnest of the  
enheritance to come, at the leaſt one drop  
of the heauenly raine, that I might cole

Every chriſ-  
tian ſoule  
may ſay I  
haue ſought  
by reading.

In break-  
ing the  
bread of ho-  
ly ſcripture  
Chriſt is  
knowne.  
Lu. 24.  
ver. 30.

Not for  
merits ſake

D.

my

## The Ladder

my thirst, for I burne in loue of t hee.

The office of contemplation. Cap. 3.



With these and such like enflamed speeches, the soule kindleth her desire as she uttereth her affection, with these allurements the soule caleteth to her selfe, the Wiseegrom Now the Lord whose eyes are set vpon the righteous, and his ears not onely open vnto their prayers: but hastily interrupting the middle course of the prayer, and speedely being compassed with the dew of heauenly grace, he meteth with the desiring soule. And being anointed with the best ointment, he recreateth every soule, he refresheth the hungry & maketh sat the lean soule, causeth her to forget all worldly thinges, and being vnmindesful of him self, by fortifying the soule, maketh her aloue, and by making her vjuncck: causeth her to be sober, and like as in certein carnall duties, the concupiscence is so overcome, that it loseth the vse of reason, and is become as it were altogether carnall. So for good cause in this heauenly contemplation, the carnall motions are so

D.v.

consumed

to Paradise.

consumed and swallowed by of the soule,  
that the flesh doth contrary the spirit  
in no thing, and the man is made as it  
were altogether spirituall.

Signes of the holy Ghoste coming  
vnto the soule.

Cap. 6.



Lord how dost thou apper  
when thou workest these  
things? what token is ther  
of thy coming? We sighes  
and teares witnesses and messengers of  
this ioye and consolation? If it be so, this  
is a new kinde of speach by a contrary  
meaning, and a signification out of vse.  
For what fellowship hath consolation  
with sorrowful sighes? or ioy w<sup>th</sup> teares?  
If these yet ought to be called teares,  
and not rather an ouer running abun-  
dance of inward dew powred vpon the  
soule, and a token bothe of the inward  
and outward purging. What like  
as in the baptisme of chil den, by the  
outward washing, is signified and signi-  
red the inward washing of the soule:  
so hear the inward purging goeth be-  
foze the outward cleansing. O happy  
teares

## The Ladder

teares by which the inward blemishes of the soule are purged, by which y<sup>e</sup> kindlings of sin are quenched. Blessed are you that so mourne, because you shall laugh. In teares y<sup>e</sup> soule acknowledge thy bydegroom, embrace thy long desired one. Now make thy self drunk in the river of pleasure, suck milke & Honny out of the brest of his consolation.

These are the pure gifts & pleasures which thy Bydegroom hath sent thee, namely, mourning and teares. With these teares he bringeth drink vnto thee by measure, these teares are thy food night and day, euen the bread that maketh strong the hart of man, which are sweeter than the honye of the honye comb.

O Lord if these teares be so exceeding sweet with the desire and remembrance of thee: how sweet shall the ioy be which shalbe taken by y<sup>e</sup> manifest sight of thee? If it be so sweet a thing to weep for thee: how sweet shall it be to reioyce of thee? But what doe wee go about to set forth openly the secret speeches of the soule: why go we about w<sup>th</sup> vnsuall wordes to expresse spiritual affectione? Those which haue not the experience thereof,  
vnderstand



## to Paradise

vnderſtād not any ſuch matters, whom  
the anointing it ſelfe teacheth in þ̄ booke  
of experience, or els þ̄ outward letter pro-  
fiteth nothing to him that readeth. Little  
god ſauour hath the reading of the out-  
ward letter, except from the hart a man  
take the expoſicion and inward ſence.

In what eſtate the ſoule remaineth  
whilſt the feruencie of the holy  
Ghoſte departeth.

### Cap. 7.



Soule we haue greatly pro-  
longed this talke, ſoꝛ it was  
god ſoꝛ vs to bee heer with  
Peeter and Iohn, to beholde  
the gloꝛy of the Widdewom, and long  
to remain with him. But I would there  
were made heer, not thꝛee noꝛ two ſe-  
uerall Tabernacles, but one, in which  
we might all dwel together, and Joy to  
gither. But as the Widdewome ſaieth.  
Let me go, for now the mornig riſeth.  
Now thou haſt receiued the viſitation  
and light of grace which thou diddeſt de-  
ſire. Wherefoꝛe the bleſſing being giuen Gen. 32  
thee, the ſinow of thy thigh being moꝛ Gen. 26  
tiſied, and thy name being changed  
from

## The Ladder

from Jacob to Israel, now for a while  
goeth aside & brydegrome long desired,  
and soon departed, he withdraweth him  
self as wel from the vision as from the  
sweetnes of contemplation, yet doth he  
still remain present touching & govern  
ment, the glory and the vnite.

A reason geue why the feruentnesse of  
the holy ghost dooth for a time leaue  
the soule.

Cap. 8.

**B**ut feare not & spouse, des-  
pair not, neither thinke thy  
self to be contemned, though  
for a while & brydegrōe hide  
his face frō thee, all these things work  
together for thy profit, and thou makest  
a gaine, bothe of his cōming and of his  
departure, he cometh for thy profit, and  
he also departeth for thy profit, he cōeth  
to geue thee comfort, and departeth to  
make thee vigilant, lest the greatnes of  
thy consolation should puffe thee vp, lest  
if the brydegrome should alwaies abide  
with thee: & shouldst begin to contemne  
thy felowes, and shouldst now attribute  
this continuall visitation, not to grace:  
but to nature, for this grace, the bryde-  
groom

to Paradise.

grown giueth to whom hee will & when  
it pleaseth him, the possession therof is  
not gotten by any right of enheritance.  
It is a cōmō sayig, ouer much familiari-  
tie breedeth contempt. The bzidegrom ther  
foze departeth from thee, least beeing  
ouer much conuersant: hee might be  
contemned, and that being absent: he  
might be the moze desired, and beeing  
desired: the moze greedily sought for, &  
being long sought for: hee might be at  
the last moze thāksfully found. Further,  
moze, what is this present life: what is  
it in respect of the glozy to come which  
shall be shewed vpon vs: surely it is a  
life like a dark riddell in which wee vn-  
derstand but a small parte, for heer we  
haue no continuing Citie but we seek  
for one to come, let vs not then take our  
banishment for our countrie, nor the er-  
nest penny for the whole price. The  
Bzidegrome cometh & departeth again.  
Sometime bringing consolation, some-  
time turning our whole estate into  
weaknes. A little while he suffereth vs  
to taste how sweet he is, and befoze we  
can fully feele it: hee withdroweth him  
self and as it were flickring ouer vs  
with

## The Ladder

Cent. 1.  
ver. 23.

with his wings spread a broode, he promys-  
keth vs to fly, as if he should say: behold  
you haue somewhat tasted how sweet  
I am, but if you wilbe fully satisfied  
with this my sweetnes: run after me  
into y<sup>e</sup> sweet sauour of myne ointments,  
lifting vp your harts where I am on  
the right hand of my Father, where you  
shal see me not in a glasse or in a riddell,  
but face to face, and where your hart  
shall fully reioyce and no man shall take  
away your ioy from you.

The care & diligence of the soule,  
lest she should be forsaken  
of God. Cap. 9.

Spo. 5.  
ver. 6.

**W**ilt take thou heed O Spouse  
how the Bridegroom turneth  
away him self, he goeth not  
far of, and although thou see  
not him, yet doubt he see thee, being full  
of eyes bothe behinde and before, thou  
canst neuer be hidden from him. Wes  
hath also about thee his spirits, being  
messengers and as it were moste sharp  
sighted Spies, that they may looke how  
thou behavest thy self in y<sup>e</sup> absēce of the  
Bridegrome, & accuse thee before him,  
if

## to Paradise.

if they may espy any token of wantonnes & scurrillitie. For this Bidegroom is selous, lest perhap thou shouldest accept some other louer. For if y go about to please any other, hee forsaketh thee and toyneth him self to other yug ones.

This Bidegroom is a daintie selow, he is bothe noble and rich, & of passing beautie aboue all the children of men, and therfore he disdaineth to haue any other but a beautifull Spouse. Yea if he see in thee but one spot or wrinkle: he straight turneth away his eyes, for hee can abide no vnclennes. Bee chaste therfore, be shamefast and humble, that so thou maist be woorthy often to be visited of thy Bidegroom. I feare lest this speech hath holden vs ouer long. But the matter both barren and sweet hath directed me therunto, which I haue not voluntarily prolonged, but haue bene drawn against my wil, with I knowe not what sweetnes therof.

The office and effect of euery stall or  
step by repetiton. Cap. 10.

**T**hat these things then which haue  
been spoken more at large, may  
the

## The Ladder

the better be seene when they are vnto  
ted and ioyned together: let vs collect  
by rehersall the sum of the things be-  
foze spoken, as in the former examples  
it may appeere to haue been noted, how  
the foresaid steps holde together, and how  
they go one befoze another, as frō time  
to time the one beeing cause of th' other.  
For reading, as it were the foundation,  
doth first offer it self, and when she hath  
giuen vs the substance of matter: she  
sendeth vs to Meditation, now Medita-  
tion very diligently enquireth what we  
ought to desire and as it were delving  
or digging, doth finde and shew where  
as the treasure is. But when by her self  
she is not able to obtain it: she sendeth  
vs vnto Prayer, Prayer lifteth vp her  
self with all her force whē she hath found  
the desired treasure, the sweetnes of  
Contēplation. This Contemplatiō com-  
migt to, doth fully reward & laboz of those  
three befoze nāed, while she maketh the  
thirsty soule drunken w<sup>th</sup> the dew of hea-  
penly sweetnes. Reading then perti-  
neth to outward exercise, Meditation to  
the inward vnderstanding, Prayer to  
the desire of the minde, Contemplation

Reading  
the founda-  
tion.

to Paradise.

is aboue all feeling of human reason.  
The first step is of those that do begin.  
The second of those that do go forward.  
The third of those that are deuout. The  
fourth of those which are blessed or hap-  
pye. These foure steps are so linckt to-  
gether, and do so by course serue one an-  
others turn y they which go befoze with-  
out them that follow can profit little or  
nothing, and they which follow without  
them that go befoze do profit seldom or  
neuer. For what doth it vantage to  
spend the time in continual reading, or  
by reading to run through the Acts and  
writings of holy men, except by chat-  
ing and feeding vpon the same: we  
drink down the soice therof, and by swa-  
llowing therof, we send it into the inner  
moste parte of the hart, that of those  
things we may haue diligent considera-  
tion of our owne estate, and endencour  
our selues to do y works of them whose  
acts we often desire to read. But how  
can we consider of these things, or how  
can we beware least by meditating,  
some false and vaine things, should passe  
the bounds, constituted by those holy  
Fathers, except first we be instructed a-

He that will  
not set his  
feet vpon y  
first Step  
shall neuer  
come vp to  
the last.

## The Ladder

Hearing is  
included in  
reading.

about such matters, either by reading or by hearing. For hearing doth after a certain manner pertain to reading. Neither of we use to say that we haue not onely read those booke which we our selues doe read vnto our selues or to other: but also those which we haue heard of our Maisters.

Jam. 1. 17.

Without  
whome we  
can do no-  
thing saith  
S. Augu-  
stine, & also  
Christe him-  
selfe.

Joh. 6. v. 5

God by his  
grace ma-  
keth vs fre  
ly to chose  
that which  
is good.

Further what doth it profit if by Me-  
ditatio a man doe see what things ought  
to be done, except by the help of prayer  
and the grace of God, we may be made  
able to obtain y<sup>e</sup> same. For euery good  
gift (saith Saint Iames) and euery per-  
fect gift descendeth from aboue from  
the father of light. Without whom we  
can doe nothing, but he in vs doth worke  
our worke, yet not altogether with out  
vs, for wee are workers with God, as  
the Apostle saith, God surely wil haue  
vs pray vnto him, and that we doe open  
vnto him, comming and sarving at the  
dore, the bosome of our will, and that  
we consent vnto him.

This consent bee required of the wo-  
man of Samaria, when he said, call thy  
husbād I wil poure grace into thee ap-  
ply y<sup>e</sup> fre choice. We required prayer of  
her



to Paradise.

ber, when he said. If thou knewest the gift of God & who it is that saith vnto thee, giue me drink: parhaps thou wouldst haue desired of him the water of life. The woman whē she heard this bēeing instructed as it were of reading: she thought in her hart that it would be good and profitable for her to haue this water. She then bēeing kindled with a desire to obtain it: turned her self vnto prayer saying. O Lord giue me this vvater that I may thirst nomore, neither at any time come hither again to drawe any water. Ioh. 4. v. 10

Beholde the hearing of the word of the Lord and Meditation following ther vpon, haue prouoked her vnto prayer. For how could she be carefully bent vnto prayer: except Meditation had first kindled her. And what should Meditation going before haue profited her: except prayer following had obtained those things, whiche Meditation did she we worth by to be desired. Therefore that Meditation may be frutesful: it becometh y<sup>e</sup> deuotion of Prayer to followe, whose frute and as it were the effect, is the sweetnes of Contemplation. Ioh. 4. v. 15.

All

## The Ladder

All these steps or degrees are declared  
to be ioyned together that they  
are inseperable. Cap. II.

Meditati-  
on without  
reading is  
erronious.



**B** these we may gather that  
reading without Meditati-  
on is saples. Meditation  
without reding is erroneous.  
Prayer without Meditation is neither  
hote nor colde. Meditation without Pray-  
er is fruteles. Prayer with deuocion  
is it that obtaineth Contēplation. The  
obtayning of Contemplation without  
Prayer, is either rare or miraculous.  
For GOD of whose power there is nei-  
ther number nor end, and whose mer-  
cie is a boue all his works, sometime of  
stones may raise vp sonnes vnto Abra-  
ham. While he compelleth those which  
be hard harted and vntwilling, quietly  
to agré and to be twilling.

And so like the prodigall sonne as the  
common saying is. He dzatweth the Dr  
by the bozne, when hee powzeth in him  
self not boeing required. Which thing  
although sometime we reade to haue  
happened vnto some, as vnto Paule  
and certain other, yet ought wee not to  
presume

*to Paradise.*

presume of such diuine things, but rather to do that which is our dutie, that is to say, to read and to meditate in the lawe of God, to pray and to loue him, that it may please him to beholde our imperfection, and to help our infirmitie, which things he teacheth vs to do, saying Ask and yee shall receiue, seek and yee shall finde, knock and it shall be opened vnto you. For now the Kinge of heauen suffereth violence, and those that be violent pluck it vnto them. Mat. 7. v. 78  
Mat. II. 12

Beholde whether the properties of the foresaid steps, may be made perfect with conuenient distinctions, how fast they cleue one to the other, and what e-very one of them doth work in vs.

Blessed is the man whose minde being void of others affaires, doth al- wayes desire on these steps to be con- uersant, which selling all that he hath, dooth buy that field in which this de- sired treasure lieth hid. For beholde and see how sweet the Lord is.

He that in the first degree is exerci- sed, in the second circumspect, in the third deuout, in the fourth lifted vp a- boue him self: by these ascenciōs which  
be

## The Ladder


he hath disposed in his hart, he doth rise  
from vertue to vertue, vntil the Lord of  
psa. 34. v. 7 Lords apper in Sion. Blessed is he to  
whō it is graunted to remain, but euen  
a litle while vpon this highest step, for  
he may truly say. beholde I feele the  
grace of the Lord, beholde with Peter  
and Iohn I doo contemplate. Beholde  
with Iacob I doo often take delight in  
the embaying of Rachell, but let this  
person take good heed to him self, least  
after this Contemplation by which he  
hath been lifted vp to the heauens, by  
any inordinate hap he fall vnto y<sup>e</sup> depth  
of hell, and least after the sight of God  
he be conuerted vnto the wanton actiōs  
of the world, and the enticing pleasures  
of the flethe, for when the weak sight of  
mans minde is not able long to sustaine  
the brightnes of the true light: let  
him softly and orderly descend vnto  
some one of the three steps by which he  
had ascended, and by course let him stay,  
now vpon one, now vpon another, some  
time vpon y<sup>e</sup> third as he listeth him self to  
chuse, and as time & place shall require.  
And loke how much the higher he moū-  
teth aboue the first step: so much the  
nearer

## to Paradise.

nearer he draweth unto God. But alas how fragile and miserable is the condition of man, behold by discourse of reason, and by the Testimonies of the holy scripture we plainly see y<sup>e</sup> in these foure steps, the perfection of a good life is contained, and in these spirituall good things a mans exercise ought to be contained. But who is he that doth it and we will praise him. No will is present in many, but to performe it: with few, and I pray God that we may be of those few.

Foure causes doo withdrawe vs  
from these foure steps.

Cap. .12.

 Here are yet foure Causes which withdrawe vs often from these foure steps, that is to say, inevitable necessitie, of honest action the vtilitie, humayne infirmitie: & worldly vanitie. The first is excusable. The second is tollerable, The third miserable. And the fourth damnable. For it had bene better for them to whom such cause pulleth away from their holy purpose, not to knowe the glory of God then to turne  
C, bac.

## The Ladder

backwarde after they haue knowne it,  
What excuse can he make of his offence?  
for iustly the Lord may say vnto him.

What could I more haue doon for  
thee then I haue doon? thou hadst no  
being and I created thee, thou diddest  
commit sinne and madest thy self the  
seruaunt of the Deuil and I redeemed  
thee, thou diddest run at randon ouer  
the world with the wicked, and I elect-  
ed thee, I gaue thee grace in my sight  
and would haue dwelt with thee, but  
thou hast despised me, thou hast  
throwne behynde thee (not onely my  
wordes) but my self also, and halt wal-  
ked after thine owne lustes.

But o good, sweet, and pitifull GOD,  
a delectable friend, a prudent counsellor,  
a mightie helper, how baine and hain-  
les is he that casteth thee away, which  
dyneth from his hart so myde & merke  
a gnest? O how unhappy and hurtfull a  
change is this, to cast away his crea-  
tor, to take in frowarde and noysome  
thoughts, and to deliuer by y secret place  
of his hart, euen the priue closet of the  
holy ghoste, which now erewhile was  
filled with celestall ioyes, so suddenly  
to

to Paradise.

oe trodden vnder foote with vnclene  
thoughts and wicked finnes, euen yet  
therin the very steps of the bydegrome  
are warme and now presently are intro-  
mitted & let in the adulterous desires,  
a soule absurd disorder, that the eares  
which euen now haue heard the words  
which are not lawfull for a man to ut-  
ter, so sone to be enclined to the hearing  
of flanders and fables, that the eyes  
which euen now were baptised with ho-  
ly teares, suddenly to be turned vnto the  
beholding of vanities, that the tounge  
which euen now did sing the pleasant  
song of the holy byde bed, which recon- Can. 1. b. 12.  
ciled with his enflamed eloquence of per-  
suasion, the byde with the bydegrome  
and brought her into the wine seller:  
shoulde againe be conuerted vnto vaine  
speeches, to filthy teasing, to the practi-  
sing of decett, and vnto flanders. Farre  
be it from vs (o Lord) but if it happen by  
humane infirmitie that we slip in to a-  
ny such offence, let vs not therfore des-  
paire: but let vs run againe vnto the pi-  
tiffull Whistion which raiseth the poore  
from the earthe, and lifteth vp the nee-  
dy from the dūghill, and he that willett  
not

## *The Ladder*

not the death of a sinner: Shall agayne  
cure and heale vs.

It is now time to conclude this Epistle.  
Let vs therfore pray vnto God presently  
to mitigate the impediments which doe  
withholde vs from his Contemplation,  
and hereafter to take them cleane away  
from vs, whome we desire to lead vs by  
the foresaid steps from vertue to vertue,  
till we may see the God of Gods in His,  
where the elected (not by drops nor by  
course) shall taste & swatnes of deuine  
Contemplation: but shall haue the Joy  
of being filled without seasing with the  
Finner of Pleasure, which no man shall  
take from them, and shall enjoy vn-  
changeable Peace, even  
Peace in it self.



*The end of S. Augustine  
Bishop of Hippo, his Lad-  
der to Paradise.*





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